
**Natural Resources, Ecology &
Parks Committee**

HB 1641

Brief Description: Decriminalizing vessel registration violations.

Sponsors: Representatives Kretz, Blake, Ahern, Buri, Ericks, Serben, DeBolt, Schindler, Kristiansen, Condotta, Orcutt, Strow, Cox, Buck and Armstrong.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the penalty for failing to register a vessel and display registration from a misdemeanor to a civil infraction.
- Changes the penalty for failing to produce registration when asked from a misdemeanor to a civil infraction.

Hearing Date: 2/8/05

Staff: Hannah Lidman (786-7291).

Background:

The vessel registration chapter covers recreational vessel registration and includes statutes governing related subjects including the following:

- Vessel dealer registration
- Confidential vessel registration
- Process for issuance of registration and allocation of funds
- Process for registration application
- Certificates of title
- Suspension of registration
- Records of purchase and sale
- Vessel inspection

A vessel is defined as every watercraft used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on the water, other than a seaplane.

Generally, no person may own or operate any vessel unless the vessel is registered and displays the proper documentation. There are certain exceptions such as vessels under 16 feet in length

with no propulsion machinery or with machinery of ten or less horsepower and human-powered vessels. A person must produce proper vessel documentation when asked by law enforcement.

Except those violations specifically exempted, a violation of the chapter constitutes a misdemeanor offense punishable only by the following fines:

- Up to \$100 per vessel for the first offense;
- \$200 per vessel for the second offense in the same year; and
- \$400 per vessel for the third and subsequent offenses in the same year.

The maximum penalty and default amount for a class 2 civil infraction is \$125. After the assessment of public safety and education (PSEA) fees and the subtraction of court fees, the remainder of the fine is given to the general fund of the jurisdiction issuing the infraction.

Summary of Bill:

The violations for failing to register and failing to produce registration when asked are changed from misdemeanor offenses to class 2 civil infractions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 2/1/05.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.